

BSM936 International Business Strategy

Academic Year 2012/13

Number of Aston Credits: 15

Number of ECTS Credits: 7.5

Staff Member Responsible for the Module:

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Pre-requisites for the module:

None.

Mode of Attendance:

On Campus

Module Objectives and Learning Outcomes:

This module builds on the theories and frameworks from BSM933 International Business. Students will broaden and deepen their knowledge of the key issues and activities involved in internationalization as a corporate strategy option. The module introduces broad theoretical approaches to strategy, deepens existing concepts and integrates them with a wide range of strategic models, tools and explanations.

Students will learn to analyse complex situations, apply strategic models and tools, interpret the results and make appropriate recommendations.

Module Content:

- Week 1:** Introduction to module. International business and the strategy tripod.
- Week 2:** Competitive strategy in an international context
- Week 3:** The resource-based view & the core competences of the corporation
- Week 4:** The institutions-based view & industry-dynamics
- Week 5:** The evolution of IB theories
- Week 6:** Strategic subsidiary management
- Week 7:** Multinational companies and world regions
- Week 8:** Emerging economies and business groups
- Week 9:** Presentations and course review
- Week 10:** Examination

Corporate Connections:

The module makes extensive use of case studies of major international companies.

International Dimensions:

The course is entirely international in terms of its content, case-study material and examination.

Method of Teaching:

The module employs a combination of lectures, case study discussion, and syndicate group work. Lectures are used to impart the basic knowledge on key theories, models and ideas of international business strategy and provide guidance on the use of appropriate techniques. Case studies and exercises permit students to experience the application of theories and techniques, while class discussions permit their evaluation and appraisal.

Method of Assessment and Feedback:

1. Group Assignment accounting for 50% of the total assessment
2. Final Exam (2-hour, pre-disclosed case study) accounting for 50% of the total assessment

1. Group Assignment

Task:

You work for a student consulting company that wants to acquire new international clients and projects. In order to establish yourself on the market as specialising in academically-driven international business strategy consultancy, you conduct research on companies that could be interested in your services, and you soon identify one where you believe that you could offer new solutions and make recommendations based on a thorough strategic analysis of its international environment.

As a student consultancy you have the advantage that you are significantly cheaper than competitors, so you want to convince prospective clients to use your expertise to explore new approaches and avenues, rather than outsource standardised research tasks.

In order to convince them about your skills, you have agreed to deliver a **report** and a short **presentation** (10 minutes), which should contain the following:

- > Identify a key issue or problem for the company that is inherently international and strategic in nature.
- > A comprehensive strategic analysis of the company relevant to the issues identified.
- > Make recommendations on the basis of the research you have done without having access to company itself.
- > Highlight what further research you could do on a consultancy basis internally in order to address the problem or other related issues.

The presentations will take place in week 9, and will give you additional feedback to fine-tune the report in response to questions and suggestions before submission. It is not assessed formally. The written report is due:

Due date: Thursday (week 9) tba – to the Postgraduate Office

Assignment length: 3000 words.

Assessment criteria:

- > ability to analyse and interpret the company's situation
- > ability to develop and apply conceptual frameworks to analyse the company
- > thoroughness of research undertaken, extent of reading, collection of relevant data, etc.
- > ability to logically arrange and present the materials
- > ability to analyse source material and draw valid conclusions to support arguments etc.
- > full acknowledgment of sources consulted, references used etc. including the bibliography



- > presentation to an acceptable standard

2. Final Exam

The exam will require you to analyse a case study similar to those discussed in class. This case study will be pre-released. Students will not be able to take their annotated copy into the exam.

Learning Hours:

Contact hours (lectures/case study work)	27
Revision	1
Directed learning and reading	60
Private study and coursework preparation	60
Exam	2
Total	150

The following essential and recommended readings are subject to change. Students should not therefore purchase textbooks prior to commencing their course. If students wish to undertake background reading before starting the course, many of the chapters/readings are available in electronic form via on-line library catalogues and other resources.

Essential Reading

Please consult the weekly reading list that is released on Blackboard.

Indicative Bibliography:

Dicken, P. (2007); *Global Shift*, Sage.

Foss, N. J., Ed. (1997). *Resources, firms, and strategies: a reader in the resource-based perspective*. Oxford, Oxford University Press

Grant, R. M. (2010 – 7E). *Contemporary Strategy Analysis*. John Wiley & Sons.

Ireland, Hoskisson & Hitt (2009, 9E), *The Management of Strategy: Concepts and Cases*, South-Western CENGAGE Learning

Peng, M. W. (2009). *Global Strategic Management*, Cengage Learning





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Recommended Journals:

Harvard Business Review
International Business Review
Journal of International Business Studies
Journal of World Business (Colombia)
Management International Review
Strategic Management Journal
Thunderbird International Business Review
Transnational Corporations



For further information on any of the opportunities that Aston Business School offers, please contact:

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